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DEPT FOR AF/E AND DRL/IRF

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/09/2019  
TAGS: [KIRF](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [ER](#)  
SUBJECT: GSE ARRESTS 10 MORE RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Classified By: Ambassador Ronald K. McMullen for reason 1.4(d).

¶1. (C) Eritrean government (GSE) security forces arrested 10 members from the Full Gospel Church in Asmara, during a mid-October raid at the home of Pastor Tewelde Hailom, according to a close embassy source. The GSE placed the pastor under house arrest and sent the other nine church members to police stations in Asmara (Note: the contact provided poloff with names of the nine arrested church members; the list of names has been emailed to DRL. End Note). Additionally, the GSE confiscated a USB thumbdrive containing names of the more than 5,000 members of the Full Gospel Church in Eritrea. The source feared the GSE would be on a continued hunt to track and possibly arrest the remaining members. Thus far, the GSE has been unsuccessful in capturing other church leaders, who had been forewarned of the mid-October raid and have since fled their homes.

¶2. (C) COMMENT: The confiscated USB thumbdrive is the first known incident of the GSE having a full list of members of an unauthorized religious group. Post believes the GSE will continue its pursuit of the remaining members of the Full Gospel Church as that the government views any religious group outside of the approved four (Catholic, Lutheran, Muslim, Orthodox) as a threat.  
McMULLEN